1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

754 763 156 kin, his clan, and the general tribal grouping. The organization of his social life has collapsed, and he is alone and isolated.

The second movement of the group is its return toward the victim under the integrating force of the mourning rite. The "half dead" man whose soul is in that dangerous position to the community of being neither sacred nor profane must be removed by ritual from any contact with his community; and its purpose now as an organized group with its ceremonial leader, a close relative of the victim's, is finally to cut him off entirely from the ordinary world and ultimately place him in his proper position in the sacred totemic world, that of the dead. The victim, on his part, reciprocates this feeling, behaving in the manner of his totem, with which he attempts to identify himself. The mourning rite is truly a *rite de passage*.

The effect of this double movement, first away from the victim and then back with all the compulsive force of one of the most powerful rituals, is obviously drastic. An analogous situation in our society is hard to imagine. If all a man's near kin, his father, mother, brothers and sisters, wife, children, business associates, friends and all the other members of the society, should suddenly withdraw themselves because of some dramatic circumstance, refusing to take any attitude but one of taboo and looking at the man as one already dead, and then after some little time perform over him a sacred ceremony believed with certainty to guide him out of the land of the living into that of the dead, the enormous suggestive power of this twofold movement of the community after it has had its attitudes crystallized can be somewhat understood by ourselves.

The magicians are the leaders who crystallize this group attitude. By the power of their rituals they organize social opinion and attitudes just as effectively and certainly as the ceremonial leader does by the sacred totemic ritual. Both depend upon the group's participation to make their power effective. It is a group situation, not an individual one, that is operative in both circumstances. It is the power of the "church" or community which integrates the total group, directed by the ceremonial leader in the totemic ceremonies, and it is the power of the church (the clan group) which destroys a man under the guidance and leadership of its magicians.

754 Black magic is a force expressed through the dysphoric condition of an individual member or members of a social group, and an ever present possible danger to all the members of Murngin society.

754 609 The attitude of the kinsmen of the man they believe to have been

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

killed by black magic is most illuminating. The sorcerer belongs to a hostile group or, what is equivalent to the Murngin mind, to one so far away that it is unknown and strange. A sorcerer of one's own clan is not asked to kill any member of it or of friendly clans, but to destroy outsiders who are looked upon as enemies and who reciprocate. The source of the enemy sorcerer's power lies within the known antagonisms which connect one's group with the foreign groups. Probably it is the foreign group's mana, as thought of by the victim and his group, which attacks a member of one's own clan through the magician's ritual. It is the enemy's magician, it must be remembered, who helps organize the local community's attitudes toward the death of its own clansman, and it is likely that he also is an organizer of the outside clan's feelings. One's own sorcerer is equally feared by his clan's enemies, and the deaths in the enemies' clans are ascribed by them to the evil worked by him. The local sorcerer is not feared by his kinsmen; rather, they go to him in times of trouble and weakness, since his power can reestablish their own and their clan's sense of well-being by killing the enemy in retaliation for the slaying of their kinsman.

The power of the black magician, then, comes (1) from the very nature of the clan itself because of its antagonism and open warfare with the people of the victim, (2) from being associated with the dead, and (3) ultimately from the action of the victim's people because of their earlier withdrawal of support from him and later thrusting him from the society.

The mana of the ceremonial leader comes from his oral and ceremonial ritual, which in turn gains its power ultimately from a society or church, viz., the clan. The mana of the medicine man comes from his ritual, in which the group must participate by its belief if his technique is to be effective, which means that his source of power is in the group. He too must have and does have his church, which in Murngin society is the group of clans.

To sum up, the power of the black magician only reverses that of the white: the healer is a member of his own or a friendly group and his magic is made effective by the positive attitude of the victim's people; on the other hand, when black magic is at work, the symbolic behavior of the victim and his people is in response to what they believe to have been the magical acts of a representative of someone outside the clans of the victim and his near kin—and even though the black magician is not present, he is the symbol around which the members of the victim's group organize their sentiments in relation to the victim.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 Oll7 Murngin Oll7

more expert they experimented with the carved figures until at the present time they are able to produce a creditable representation of the human form (see Pl. 135A, B).

From that time until comparatively recently the *jiritja*[19] men adopted the Macassan custom of using carved grave posts, but only when the body was buried instead of being placed on a platform. When a *jiritja* man died, his moiety asked a *dua* man to carve a mortuary post to place on the grave.[20] Later, when the body was disinterred and the burial dances were being performed a *jiritja* man, taking the mortuary post with him, went from camp to camp collecting food for the participants in the burial rituals.[20] At the completion of the meal the post was replaced on the empty grave.

The chief interest of the carved human figures lies in the fact that in a little over two generations the aborigines, without the help and for most of the time without even the knowledge of the white man, have taken a simple post figure of foreign origin and through improvement of techniques can now carve in wood heads and full-length human figures of considerable merit.

The Rev. F. W. Chaseling, when a missionary at Yirrkalla, was the first to discover that the aborigines of that locality were carving the human figure in the round. This discovery came about in a curious manner. When King George V died, Chaseling, in one of his sermons, expressed grief at the great loss the nation had suffered. This sermon and the concern of the missionary over the loss of his king so impressed *Mawulan* that he carved a mortuary post,[21] similar to those used on the *jiritja* graves, but which was supposed to resemble the King. This post *Mawulan* presented to the missionary so that he would be reminded of his dead monarch. Chaseling, in 1938, realizing the importance of his discovery, presented the mortuary post to the Australian Museum, Sydney. Unfortunately the Museum authorities, unaware that the post was a unique example of aboriginal handicraft, did not describe it in a scientific journal.

I was able to examine this figure early in 1949. It was the head of a bearded man (Pl. 138C, D) cut on the end of a hardwood post about four feet long and five inches in diameter. The face, about five inches long, consisted of eyes, a nose, lips and ears; the ears, however, being somewhat out of position.[22] The body of the pole is decorated with ceremonial string.

I also collected at Yirrkalla a number of human heads carved in wood, most of them representing spirit people or *Mokoi* who live in the surrounding jungles and eucalyptus forests.

18. This was because the aborigines made *Bopalindi* a member of the *jiritja* moiety.
19. According to Warner (1937), p. 434, at Milingimbi burial posts are placed on the graves.
20. Warner (1937), p. 433, describes this food-collecting ritual at Milingimbi, and the Berndts (1949), p. 216, at Yirrkalla.
21. Warner (1937), p. 501, refers to a burial post being erected on the aboriginal graves at Milingimbi. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 48, record the finding of a burial post figure at the same locality.
22. I am indebted to the Australian Museum, Sydney, for the photograph of this specimen, F.46535, and the relevant details.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
O117 Murngin O117

796 culmination of all the religious and totemic ceremony of the past
837 weeks, and helps to serve as an emotional outlet. It establishes goodwill between participants, and cements the bonds of friendship, bringing groups closer together. Ill-will and jealousy cannot, theoretically, flourish at such a ceremonial time. Moreover, it draws the women closer into the sacred scheme of the Kunapipi, by entering into the fundamental physical relationship between men and women: for the sexual act is basic to these rituals, its significance deeply rooted in the concept of procreation, brought about through the contact of male and female. Thus ceremonial copulation, ritualized in the Kunapipi, substantiates the religious doctrine, and stresses its underlying meaning of fertility.

Generally speaking, in the Kunapipi ceremonial areas, ritual copulation is termed *ka'rangara*; and in the Birrundudu Kadjari (equivalent of the Kunapipi) it is associated with certain special forms of dancing by men and women on the sacred ground. At Yirrkalla it is called *djambinba*, meaning "the working", for natives use the word *djama* ("work") when referring to the act of coitus. But the exchanging of wives is called *g'ruliriliri* or *liriliriija*.

• [609] Visitors who have come for the Kunapipi ceremonies have their correct tribal relationships established to everyone else in the camp. Most of those who are invited are known; but others come from far away (from Rose River, for instance, or from the south of Milingimbi), and it is necessary to determine their approximate relationship to others for the purpose of exchanging wives. This is done with much talk and discussion, comparing subsections, Dreaming affiliations, and so on. When a local man finds that a certain visitor is his classificatory brother, he will send his own younger brother to inform him that he may have the local man's wife for Kunapipi copulation; presents too are sent to the visitor, expressing goodwill. In return, the visitor sends a message that he will accept this arrangement, and that his own wife will come to the Kunapipi for ceremonial copulation with his local "brother"; he also sends presents. This is the normal procedure. But at times two men, without the aid of a third party, will decide between themselves to exchange wives; and occasionally, these days, a man may arrange matters with a visitor's wife (with whom he desires intercourse, or with whom he is
796 having a liaison) without the consent of her own husband.

835 This means that usually in the Kunapipi a man will copulate with
[601] his "long way" brother's wife, whom he calls *kalei* (wife), normally a classificatory mother's brother's daughter or mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter, the daughter of her partner's *mukul* (mother's mother's brother's daughter). This, aborigines say, is the pattern for "the new generation", which differs from the traditional arrangement of the old people. In the old days (that is, prior to white
[602] contact in this and adjacent areas) it was customary for ceremonial

192 431 The giver knows that his gift must be reciprocated eventually and he gains much satisfaction from the anticipation of this.

(2) *kännän gurrupän*, a free gift, pure and simple, without any reciprocal obligation, as between *gurruto* (relations) of certain orders, and *mulkuro* (strangers), where there is a unilateral obligation to make presents. [574 609] To strangers, especially to visitors, it is customary, even obligatory, to make gifts of food or *gerri*, but as these people do not come within the normal kinship horizon there exists no established code of behaviour towards them and reciprocation is therefore not expected.[24]

(3) *baka bäkmärämma*, (lit. tail break), i.e. "to turn back the tail", to reciprocate. A present with definite reciprocal obligation. This type of giving carries the obligation to make a return gift or payment at once, and is quite different from the vague and indefinite obligation which characterises gifts of the *yanna gurrupän* type.

[606] (4) *milmarr, bundur*, the name applied to special forms of cumulative giving of gifts to relatives of certain

[24] The importance of discovering some bond between individuals in Arnhem Land society, in order to establish a code of behaviour, is stressed by the fact that those outside the kinship system are called *mulkuro*, (strangers). When I asked a native who was short of tobacco if he had asked a certain white man he replied at once: "*Yuta bällända duall—mulkuro*". He is a new white man that one—a stranger (with the implication "and therefore one with whom I have no bond, towards whom I have no established pattern of behaviour"), that is, one whose reactions there is no means of predicting.

10: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1958
OI17 Murngin OI17

159 We Wangurri clans-people are a bush people (pages 16-29, 42). We are very strong and very fierce and good fighters. All the coast people are afraid of us. Our country comes to the salt water at only one place on Arnhem [439] Bay (map, page 40). It was here that we saw the Macassar. They brought us presents of rice, syrup, calico, tomahawks, dugout canoes, knives, and gin. We gave them pearl shell, pearls, tortoise shell, sandalwood, and other woods they use for medicine. We helped them gather trepang (pages 456-458).

159 273 439 579 At these times, when the Macassar prahus took down their sails and masts and their men disembarked, our old men drank plenty, for it was then they got all the gin they wanted for the presents they gave the Macassar men. There would always be big fights. In the morning you could see blood everywhere and many people were killed. While the old men fought with the knives from around their belts and with tomahawks, clubs, and spears, we children used to sneak in and eat the food that they had left. We always waited our chance and rushed in and ran away again.

159 431 609 I can remember one day my father's giving me some tortoise shell and saying, "Mahkarolla, you go and give this to that Macassar man and make friends with him so that when he comes again he will know you, and you will know him, and you will have a feeling of friendship for each other." I did. The Macassar man talked to me but I didn't understand him. I forget the rest.

159 574 Another thing I remember when I was very small: I went with my father through the Owiyamil clan country to the Wulkara people for a corroboree. This is the path our ranga took in the stories we know about him, and those people are also Sand Fly people (pages 33-35), just as we Wangurri are.

159 857 Before we were circumcised we little boys played spear-fighting games, talked about sneaking up and killing a man, and we threw clay mud balls at each other. When it was hot in the rainy season we swam in the sea (pages 125-126).

Later we played being grown men and women with the little girls. We made little fires in the sand beaches. We went out just like our fathers and pretended to spear fish, and the little girls went into the bush and brought home bush food (vegetable food). We made little bark huts just like our fathers' and mothers'. The girls would come in and lie beside us as our wives and we were their husbands.

When we were little boys, others boys who were a little bit bigger joked us about the wives we were going to marry. This made me feel very ashamed. Little girls joked the same way. They also became ashamed. When we got bigger we weren't ashamed any more. We were glad.

159 867 I think I always knew it was wrong to "play with" a girl of the Yiritcha

10: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1958
OI17 Murngin OI17

159 the English Company Island, people who still remembered how to do it
[501] (pages 459-460). Some of the people came out to our boat by lying on a large log and paddling with their hands and feet. I got in the dinghy and went ashore with some of the people on the boat. When my mari saw me
[152] he cried and cried. Some people are like that among us black men. We cry when we meet people just as we cry sometimes when we tell them goodbye. I tried to talk to him, but I couldn't say anything. It was just the same as if I had lost my language. I had to talk to him in the sign language. I felt very foolish. I brought flour with me, but they did not know what it was.
[252] They cooked flour in paper bark just like they did palm tree flour.
[609] All the people were very angry with the white man for keeping me away so long, and some of them sneaked out in the bush and got their spears and clubs and were going to kill the white man. I said no, that it was no good. I said, "The white men talk very hard and sometimes they swear at you, but inside they are all right. Sometimes when they swear, they mean
[439] good." While we were there I got my people to make gifts of turtle shell and pearl to the white man, and he gave them hatchets and knives and calico. I got in the boat and started to go back to Port Darwin with the white man. Cape Don Tommy and the white man quarreled when we got to Croker Island because Cape Don Tommy wanted to sleep on shore. We got out at Croker Island and went by canoe to Cape Don. There I met that girl again, but her husband was there then. We went on to Port Darwin for a moon and came back to Elcho Island. Once more I went into the bush and stayed.

His Wives and Their Parents

159 581 828 825 Black men walk about single and by themselves. At first they have no mates. By and by they find one that belongs to them. By and by children come. White men walk about by themselves. By and by they find a woman, and more children come out. The Macassar man was all the same.

Big old man kangaroo walks about single and by himself. By and by he catches his woman, and then there are little kangaroos. Opossum and fly and bandicoot—they are all the same.

Python catches his mate and by and by there are eggs, then there are children. Frilled-neck lizard, native companion, honeybees, pigeon, hawk-billed turtle, and all those animals—they are just the same.

Black men cut down trees and by and by little ones come up. Everywhere and all the time it is always the same. Walk around single, by and by a mate, and by and by children. There is an inside meaning to this. Some of us old men who are not fools understand. If those two Wawilak creator sisters had not done wrong in their own country and fornicated with those

159 581 828 113 825

797 speaking groups of Elcho Island, the Glyde and Goyder
754 Rivers on the west, and eastwards around Buckingham,
Arnhem and Melville Bays, to Cape Arnhem and Port
[177 Bradshaw and south to Caledon and Blue Mud Bays, had
184] little actual experience of the sinister cult of the *kalka*. But when the Methodist Mission moved from Elcho Island to the Crocodile Group and set up its headquarters at Milingimbi, an island lying a short distance off the coast, it brought the people who had accompanied the Mission into the very stronghold of a form of secret killing or sorcery that was strange to them. On this account they
● 609 came to regard the people of the west—whom they called
186 *warnba*, strangers—with fear and suspicion, and they have been more or less at loggerheads with them ever since,
[152] resulting in frequent blood feuds, and a considerable loss of life.

For years it was the practice of the natives who had moved from their own countries to the island of Milingimbi, into what was to them foreign and hostile territory, to discourage visits of the local people by acts of aggression and violence, depending on the Mission to protect them from reprisals.

797 Mr. Webb, who was in charge of the Methodist Mission
728 in the Crocodile Islands, once informed me, when I was at
722 Milingimbi during a brief respite from patrols on the mainland of Arnhem Land, that in the early days of the Mission there he had once, to maintain peace, bought all their fighting spears from the natives, but that when an attack from the mainland was reported to be imminent he had had to re-issue these—though in actual fact the attack
609 did not occur.
186 As often occurs when a people are brought into contact with those of a different culture, the natives from the east tended to exaggerate traits of the Burara that they regarded
[582] as undesirable and often told me ribald stories stressing the misdeeds of their neighbours. After a long recital of the faults of the Burara, whom he stigmatized as *warnba*, one informant remarked by way of special emphasis, '*yappa lukka!*'—they cohabit with their sisters. The brother-sister
[835 tabu is rigidly enforced in east Arnhem Land. Even to
684] mention the name of a woman in the presence of her brother is a grave ritual offence, called *mirriri*, and brother-sister incest is a crime for which there is no expiation, punished by the death of both parties.

582 The charge of incest against the Burara may owe its
835 origin to the fact that these people, unlike their neighbours to the east, had a normal tribal organization, which meant that members of clans of opposite moieties within the tribe and of the appropriate kinship status could marry, since the tribe is not exogamous. Because people between
582 whom marriage was permitted were actually members of
835 the same tribe, the practice would suggest incest to their
152 neighbours of the east, already fearful of the magic of their
186 *kalka* and ready to attribute to these people practices that were to them anti-social and unnatural. This attitude of the Elcho Island people was well shown by the fact that they charged their neighbours with cannibalism and said of
[26] them '*ngamak lukka*'—they eat flesh (human)—overlooking the fact that they themselves also practised a form of ritual

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

relatives and friends is a matter of amusement. It is only possible to die once, and in the ageless wandering through the unbroken round of day and night, the Stone Age fatalist finds his highest form of excitement in continuing a feud, in raiding other hordes, and in other forms of violence, such as capturing women from another man—in itself a profitable pastime. A general raid is the *pièce de résistance*.

Nevertheless I found nomads to be happy and cheerful; they bear pain and disappointment and face death with extraordinary courage. Resilient natures find humour in a mundane primeval world, and they are always on the look-out for something to laugh at—even to the extent of being amused at the contortions of an expiring enemy or at a healthy man's imitation of physical disabilities in another. Youths and men are convulsed with laughter at the antics of a man aping the gait of a leper, and at the uncertain gropings of the partially blind. Jokes are very simple, and the average is no better than a jealous remark about an old man negotiating for youthful wives: 'He must be a turtle', the reference being to the fact that a turtle usually lays several dozen eggs.

Under all this rank growth of primitive emotion lie the roots of qualities we value most in civilized man; such as courage, kindliness, devotion, and honesty. Stone Age man is ordinarily well intentioned toward the welfare of any white man or alien stranded in the bush, and countless stories are told of their rescue of them. In such circumstances they treat them as privileged invalids, and except when bad impressions have been made by previous visitors, they are accepted at face-value. If they act as gentlemen they are treated as such; but if they abuse the hospitality of their hosts, and attempt to rape the women, as has frequently happened, they are exterminated by the only law known to the nomad.

It is impossible to walk through the bush and not notice

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

the nomad's continuous thought and consideration in breaking branches, waiting at waterholes till the white man drinks first, breaking twigs for him to sleep on, and offering him the choicest parts of their scanty food. When the track has led through mangrove swamps they have paused on the edge of the mud and apologized for having led me into the mess; their solicitations have been embarrassing, and they have offered to carry me through the slime and tangled roots.

Early one morning two Yulengor left with me on a launch to take medical aid to a horde about thirty miles from Yirrkala. Shortly afterwards the engine gave trouble, and after I had set this right a spark escaped from the magneto cable and ignited petrol fumes in the cabin and exploded the fuel. In a few moments the boat was hopelessly ablaze from stem to stern and we had to dive overboard to extinguish the flames on our limbs and clothing. We were then about a mile from a small rocky island and started to swim toward it, but my knees were badly burnt and I was floundering badly. The boys then closed in and told me to put a hand on either of their shoulders, and in this way they helped me ashore. One boy was uninjured and swam the channel to the mainland for a canoe in which we hoped to make our way home. Whilst he was away the other lad regaled me with stories of several fatal shark attacks, and casually remarked that while I had been tinkering with the engine they had watched a twelve-foot shark cruising round the launch. Aboriginal courage is of the highest order, and their loyalty and devotion are above question. They make no parade of noble and unsuspected qualities, for they are among the natural attributes of the race and are accepted as a matter of course.

After a long patrol, Northern Territory troopers had captured two troublesome nomads and were taking them to jail, but when they were crossing a flooded creek the white men lost their horses and were carried downstream. The